

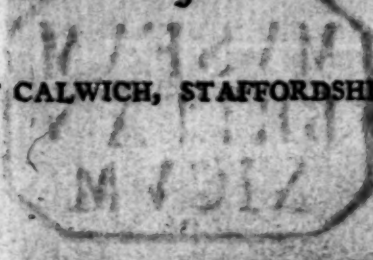
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THE  
VALES OF WEVER,

A  
Loco-Descriptive Poem,

INSCRIBED TO  
THE REVEREND JOHN GRANVILLE,

OF CALWICH, STAFFORDSHIRE.



BY J. GISBORNE, ESQ.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY.

1797.

=  
Entered at Stationers Hall.

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VALLES OF WEVER

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1797.

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TO THE  
REVEREND JOHN GRANVILLE.

---

DEAR SIR,

*THE following Poem (a very few passages excepted) was written during the time I had the satisfaction of residing in your neighbourhood; and though I am fully sensible how feebly it delineates the different scenes which gave it birth, yet I feel assured that you will gladly receive it as a proof of that friendship, which neither absence can weaken, nor distance impair.*

*I remain,*

DEAR SIR,

*Your obliged*

*And affectionate Friend,*

July 3d, 1797.

JOHN GISBORNE.



TO THE  
REVEREND JOHN GRANVILLE.

DEAR SIR,

THE following poem (a very few

pages omitted) was written during the time I had the

satisfaction of residing in your neighbourhood; and though I

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nor remembrance can dissolve.

I remain,

DEAR SIR,

Yours obliged

And affectionate Friend,

July 30. 1797.

JOHN GIBBON.



# CANTO I.

B



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# THE VALES OF WEVER.

## CANTO I.

—Mark the fable woods

That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow  
With what religious awe the solemn scene  
Commands your steps; as if the reverend form  
Of Minos or of Numa should forsake  
The Elyfian seats, and down the embowering glade  
Move to your pausing eye. Behold the expanse  
Of yon gay landscape! *Akenside.*

WOOTTON! if e'er thy shadowy vales,

Thy rock-roof'd canopies and dales,

WOOTTON! *if e'er, l. i.*] The house in which the Author resides is the property of ~~W.B.~~ Davenport, Esq. and from its very elevated situation commands a diversified extent of beautiful scenery. The lofty bank, on which the house stands, descends rapidly into a pleasing valley, decorated with low-browed cliffs and hanging woods. Towards the north this valley divides at the foot of a steep woody promontory, and forms two distinct dales.



Diffus'd enchantment o'er my breast,  
 Or charm'd one anxious thought to rest;  
 Now, as I tread thy silvan steeps, 5  
 That nodding chill those verdant deeps;  
 While noon the summer's glorious birth  
 Salutes, and stars with flowers the earth,  
 Lifts to the sun their filken eyes,  
 And musks with balmier breath the skies; 10  
 Receive amid thy vocal throng  
 The tribute of my parting song.

O'er heaven's wide azure vapours roll,  
 Gray sailing to the arctic pole,  
 Soft as they ride the whisper'd gale 15  
 (Broad shadows shuddering down the vale),

The dale that shapes its course on the right is the most interesting, and abounds with rude side-screens of wood and rock, with a small rivulet fretting over a stony bottom. This dale terminates at last in a narrow but steep channel, where, during the rainy seasons, the mountain torrents struggle for expansion, and the little rivulet assumes a new and dignified character.

*Thy rock-roof'd canopies, l. 2.]* Some of the rocks in the dale resemble the walls of an old castle; others are rudely disjointed, or hang over in the form of a canopy.



Part their grand forms, blue gulfs disclose,  
 Swell or contract as Zephyr blows;  
 Onward they roll sublime and flow,  
 And edge their wondrous shapes with snow. 20  
 Meanwhile the sun with rapid glance  
 Glares from behind his shroud askance,  
 Bids his far-streaming rays illumine  
 With partial lights the moving gloom;  
 Dart on the hills or rustic spire, 25  
 And gild interior skies with fire;  
 Then soars aloft, of victory proud  
 O'er yielding continents of cloud,  
 Climbs on bright step his sapphire way,  
 And shines in all the dignity of day! 30

From my bold terrace bursts the scene,  
 Rob'd in a waving vest of green;  
 Swift slopes my foreground's velvet lawn,  
 Late glistering with the tears of morn;



Bends o'er the shelving cliffs, or shrinks, 35  
 And tufts with fern the giddy brinks ;  
 While mingling oaks in rude arcades  
 Chequer the green expanse with shades.  
 Fronting, a sister lawn displays  
 Umbrageous promont'ries and bays ; 40  
 With grace superior swells sublime,  
 And marks the mouldering wrecks of time ;  
 Sees the disjointed crags dissolve,  
 Or down the echoing banks revolve ;  
 Sees the wild torrent's maddening tide 45  
 Her grass-enamell'd lap divide,

*Sees the wide torrent's maddening tide, l. 45.]* The little rivulet, that flows along the valley immediately below Wootton, is extremely subject to a violent influx of water, from the torrents that perpetually stream from Wever in the wet seasons, and for the most part coalesce in this one channel. In the month of August, 1793, this channel underwent a great enlargement. After a morning, not remarkable for the heat of the atmosphere, the clouds suddenly collected from the north-west, while others of unusual blackness rolled slowly from the north-east. They met over Wever hills, and after an apparent conflict, which was attended with brilliant lightning and loud thunder, discharged such profuse torrents, that the little rivulet, which one hour before could scarcely excite attention by a gentle murmur, became an object of terror to the adjacent village, tearing up the public roads, and sweeping away walls, and the produce of gardens, with irresistible fury. This



Grow with the storm, disclose huge caves,  
 Scoop out an empire for his waves :  
 Or marks, as now, with happier smile,  
 Nor tempest rave, nor torrent boil, 50  
 But sunshine clothe her birchen crest,  
 The white rill gleaming down her breast.  
 Then o'er the dark embowering trees  
 Wind the green slopes with graceful ease ;  
 Culture each fide-long bank inlays, 55  
 And 'mid the scatter'd umbrage plays.

memorable form lasted for near two hours, extending, however, but a few miles over the country. On the following day, the waters having subsided, the ravages of the preceding evening were fully disclosed. Below the steep channel, which was mentioned in a former note as the termination of one of the dales, you might see not only trees torn up by their roots, and large cavities formed from the partial dislodgment of the impending banks, but immense piles of stone that had been forcibly scooped out from the bottom, and tumbled one upon another in the wildest manner. Beyond you might see other enormous stones either left on their bases (after having been removed for a considerable distance), or severed in twain from mutual concussion. Entering the meadows below the vale, these waters received large reinforcements, and, after sweeping away the bridge on the turnpike road that leads from Ashborne to Uttoxeter, discharged all their violence into the river Dove.



High on those undulating lands  
 Half lost in leaves the village stands,  
 Lifts her gray tower with age o'erspread,  
 And light reposes on its head: 60

Then branches wide the vale below,  
 And all the opening landscapes glow;  
 In reaches bold, in grand removes,  
 Sweep hamlets, lawns, and cluster'd groves,  
 Till the sky-tinctur'd distance fades 65  
 Beyond those dim retiring glades,

Where, floating wide, cerulean haze  
 Empurples EATON's leafy maze.

Ah Eaton! soon thy woodlands gay  
 Shall live alone in MUNDY's lay, 70

*Half lost in leaves the village, l. 58.] ELLASTON.*

*Lifts her gray tower, l. 59.] Ellaston church.*

*Then branches wide the vale, l. 61.] The vale that leads from Ashborne to Uttoxeter.*

*Ah Eaton! l. 69.] Eaton woods make a fine break in the distant outline of the scene from the terrace at Wootton: but since this poem was begun,*



On Fancy's page immortal bloom,  
 And spurn the sawpit's yawning tomb.  
 Oft-times the Bard, where Needwood low'rs,  
 Sigh'd as he view'd your conscious bowers,  
 Linger'd o'er CLARKE's untimely bier, 75  
 And Friendship dropp'd a tuneful tear.  
 Hence, Eaton, when thy woods dethron'd  
 Stoop from the heights they long have crown'd,  
 Dryads and Fauns, a filvan train,  
 At eve shall mourn thy parting reign, 80

the axe has made considerable destruction, and the Author is informed that all the woods are condemned. In Mr. Mundy's elegant poem on Needwood Forest, these woods, and their late proprietor, are thus beautifully noticed.

" Yes, Eaton banks, in vain I strive  
 To hide the griefs your oaks revive:  
 Bow thy tall branches, grateful wood!  
 Afford me blossom, leaf, and bud.  
 He, for whose memory these I blend,  
 Thy late lost master, was my friend.  
 Fall, gentle dews! fresh zephyrs, breathe!  
 Spread, cooling shades! preserve my wreath!  
 Alas, it withers ere its time!—  
 So faded he in manly prime:  
 But Virtue, scorning Friendship's aid,  
 Rears its own palms which never fade!"



In pale procession climb the steep,  
 And o'er thy withering honours weep;  
 Then shall the blue-ey'd nymphs of Dove  
 Glance at thy naked realms above,  
 Lean on their silver oars, and hear 85  
 The dulcet dirge with feeling ear.

HYGEIA! guardian of these views!  
 With thee, fair guide, while summer strews  
 Our walks with blushing sweets, I seek  
 WEVER'S cool vales, and breezy peak. 90  
 And first our eager steps shall bend,  
 Where Wootton's low-brow'd cliffs impend,  
 Where some coy path obscur'd from day  
 Shall weave for us an artless way,

WEVER'S *cool vales*, l. 90.] "Wever hills are a very elevated situation, overlooking, or at least as high as any of the Morland or Derbyshire Peak hills, which may be seen from their summits. I believe them to be from one to two hundred yards perpendicularly higher than any of the hills in the south of the county. The fall even from the foot of these hills to the highest parts of the Dove, or the Churnet, is very great, and those rivers are very rapid." See Pitt's *View of the Agriculture of Staffordshire*, p. 191.



While many a rill with querulous tones **95**  
 Frets o'er the moss-embroider'd stones,  
 And liquid music softly wakes  
 The stillness of those tangled brakes.

First the huge oak with dusky charms  
 The sun's meridian rage disarms; **100**  
 Proud o'er the beetling crag he bends,  
 With bold contortions heaven ascends;  
 His delving roots abrupt recoil,  
 Or struggle through the flinty soil;  
 Chill twilight shrouds his trunk below, **105**  
 And glory flumbers on his brow.

Next the tall ash with airy grace  
 Sweeps from the rock's averted face,  
 Slowly expands her green attire,  
 And bids her penfile gems aspire: **110**

*First the huge oak, l. 99.]* Many of the cliffs in the dales appear rifted by the oaks which have forcibly inserted their roots and trunks between them: and some of the trees seem to support the disjointed strata of stone with their elbowy roots and excrescences.



While hollies spread their horrent screen,  
 And triumph in immortal green;  
 And many a time-worn elder shoots,  
 The gray moss twining round his roots.

Bosom'd in gloom, yon birch displays 115

High o'er the bank her streaming sprays,  
 Silvers her bark with flakes of white,  
 And glistens with unborrow'd light.  
 Round crags by rude concussions torn,  
 The rival of the berried thorn 120  
 Clusters with crimson tufts her boughs,  
 And all the living coral glows.

Here as the silent orb of night  
 Silvers the crags with sacred light,  
 Pours through the gaping rocks her beams, 125  
 And sheds a glory on the streams,  
 Old towers and ramparts burst around,  
 Enchantment walks the hoary ground:

*The rival of the berried thorn, l. 120.] The mountain ash, or quicken.*



Black shades contrast the illumin'd scene,  
 And horror frowns those dells between. 130  
 Pale o'er the woodlands moonshine glows,  
 And pale the lustrous deluge flows,  
 Rolls o'er the graves on WEVER's brow,  
 While yellow vapours swim below.

Such scenes the sorrowing MELNA sought, 135  
 Her soul with pure affection fraught,  
 Pierc'd with quick step and throbbing breast  
 CONA's rude vales, distracted guest;  
 Bath'd with unpitied tears the earth,  
 And sigh'd and mourn'd her hapless birth; 140  
 Call'd on HIDALLAN's darling name,  
 And wail'd her warrior's thirst of fame.

*And horror frowns those dells between, l. 130.] Alluding to the steep woody promontory which was mentioned in the first note.*

*Rolls o'er the graves on WEVER's brow, l. 133.] Alluding to the tumuli on the summits of Wever hills.*

*Such scenes the sorrowing MELNA sought, l. 135.] For several of the images in the following episode I am indebted to the works of Ossian.*



Thus while she moan'd, remorseless Night  
 Dimm'd the last blush of western light,  
 Wove a black canopy of cloud, 145  
 And round her flung his sable shroud:  
 No stars arose with changeful blaze,  
 To cheer her path's bewilder'd maze;  
 No moon-beams glimmering through the trees  
 Trembled, obedient to the breeze. 150  
 A while the weeping beauty stood  
 (Cold tremors coursing through her blood),  
 Then screaming rush'd, with furious tread,  
 Along the mansions of the dead;  
 Where at this hour o'er mouldering graves 155  
 His beard of snow the thistle waves.  
 At length more calm, with looks resign'd,  
 She check'd the tumult of her mind,  
 Rais'd her white arms, implor'd the moon  
 To shed on night her placid noon, 160  
 Then sunk in agony of prayer,  
 Pale kneeling monument of care!



Queen of the skies, who silver'ft wide  
 This dreary world with glory's sea,  
 Roll from thine orb the radiant tide, 165  
 And pour thy lucid streams on ME !

## II.

Here muffled dark in horrors dread,  
 I bow to sacred Love's command,  
 While anguish clasps my aching head,  
 And terror chills with palsied hand : 170

## III.

Oh hear ! oh guide these wilder'd feet  
 To where my lov'd Hidallan stays ;  
 Give me his long-lost form to meet,  
 To light his eyes with fond amaze !



## IV.

Give him, oh! ere with life I part, 175

Give him to lull these wild alarms;

Once more to sooth my dying heart,

Once more to bless his MELNA's arms!

Then ceas'd the fair. With swimming eyes

She mark'd the shade-embosom'd skies, 180

Saw the grim night diffuse around

A blacker pall upon the ground:

"Alas! my fruitless prayer"—she cried,

Sunk on the dew-cold moss, and figh'd.

O'er her fine form disastrous Sleep 185

Wav'd his wand wet from Lethe's deep,

Dire dreams convuls'd her labouring mind,

And phantoms started from behind:

When, lo! through opening clouds the moon

Shed o'er the vales her lucid noon, 190

Silver'd the fable cheeks of night,

And horror smil'd at holy light.



Instant awaken'd by the glare  
 Of glory soft diffus'd through air,  
 She wonder'd much, with whom, and how, 195  
 Her steps e'er sought these wilds below,  
 What spirit of the midnight hour  
 Dragg'd her from Cona's rock-roof'd bower;  
 When all at once remembrance dread  
 Impetuous seiz'd her shudd'ring head. 200  
 "Who comes?" she shriek'd, "who haunts this vale?"  
 "His looks! his robes of mist! how pale!"  
 "'Tis he, 'tis he! my life! my love!"  
 "Ye gods who hear me from above,  
 "'Tis my Hidallan!—heavens! he flies, 205  
 "Drinks with unfeeling ear my cries."  
 Thrice with impassion'd grief she pray'd,  
 And thrice she clasp'd the fleeting shade;  
 But when she saw his buoyant feet  
 Through ether's argent realms retreat, 210  
 Saw stars dim twinkle in his vest,  
 And moonshine glimmer through his breast,



Then with mad foot she smote the ground,  
 Then started at the bursting sound;  
 Wrung with wild hands her shadowy hair, 215  
 And star'd, and laugh'd with fierce despair;  
 Thrill'd with delirious shouts the grove,  
 As frenzy fann'd the flames of love.

Sweet NORBURY, deck'd with rural smiles,  
 Gleams faintly through these silvan aisles; 220  
 'Mid Gothic grandeur soars serene  
 O'er bold varieties of scene;

*Sweet NORBURY, l. 219.]* The parsonage at Norbury commands one of the most beautiful and extensive prospects in the county. Situated on an elevated woody knoll, that rises from the banks of the Dove, it overlooks the entire vale from Ashborne to Uttoxeter, whose lofty spires are disclosed at each extremity. From the north side of the house, Wootton and its adjacent woods appear to the greatest advantage, and beyond them Wever and the neighbouring hills form a noble back-ground to this rich and varied landscape. The parsonage was built by the late rector, Mr. Mills, whose happy taste in selecting the present situation cannot be disputed.

*'Mid Gothic grandeur, l. 221.]* The church at Norbury is a venerable pile of building, and from the banks of the Dove has a beautiful and highly picturesque effect. The following passage from a celebrated poet so nearly applies to the general scenery about Norbury, that I cannot refrain from quoting it at length:

“ — O ye dales  
 Of Tyne, and ye most ancient woodlands; where  
 Oft as the giant flood obliquely strides,



Sees Wever arch his giant crest,  
 And give the south his lawny breast;  
 Or when imperious winter scowls, 225  
 "And loud and long" the whirlwind howls,  
 With naked majesty control  
 The frenzy of the northern pole;  
 Sees the connected vales unfold  
 Labour's rich realms of green and gold; 230  
 Sees at her feet the waters toil,  
 And drinks the thunder of Britannia's Nile.

And his banks open and his lawns extend,  
 Stops short the pleased traveller, to view  
 Prefiding o'er the scene some rustic tower  
 Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands."—*Akenside*.

*With naked majesty*, l. 227.] The summits of Wever occasionally assume a singular and beautiful appearance during a violent snow-storm, when it happens that the clouds are so directed by the currents of wind, that, while the vales are lost amidst the driving vapour, these summits enjoy the full splendour of a meridian sun.

*And drinks the thunder of Britannia's Nile*, l. 232.] Dr. Plot and other writers have given the Dove, in consequence of the great fertility of its waters, the appellation of the British Nile:

"Down yon mid vale the British Nile,  
 Fair Dove, comes winding many a mile."—*Mundy*.



Yon oak, whose tottering trunk displays  
 The tarnish'd pride of other days,  
 Still wreathes his shatter'd head with green,  
 With charm of contrast aids the scene.  
 Oft have I linger'd to survey  
 That trunk with age enamell'd gray;  
 O'er his rent bark pale lichen bends,  
 And moss her folds of velvet blends,  
 Where insect nations range unseen,  
 And mine the arboresecent screen;  
 Weave with nice skill the eider fold,  
 And cradle embryo young from cold.  
 With what fell art the spider spreads  
 His glistening snare, mechanic threads;  
 Redundant meshes bright unfurls,  
 And round each bud ingenious whirls.  
 Ye insect armies, who delight  
 To skim the realms of breezy night,  
 Or twinkling through the noontide glare,  
 With busy murmurs fill the air;



If floating on the zephyr's breath,  
 Ye rush within these webs of death,  
 From his dread ambush darts the foe, 255  
 Enraptur'd with the cries of woe,  
 Swift glides along his tremulous toil,  
 And riots o'er his struggling spoil.

As Spring's ambrosial hands unfold  
 The floral buds of breathing gold, 260  
 With thy sweet voice, Hygeia, lead  
 Stout youths and damsels o'er the mead;  
 And where yon oak exalts his crest,  
 And broad expands his jutting breast,  
 Weave the gay-smiling dance around, 265  
 To simple measures beat the ground,  
 Twine his hoar trunk with Flora's charms,  
 With fragrance wreath his dusky arms.  
 So when the Summer's rural train  
 Swarms o'er the hayfield's tufted plain; 270



And when relentless Autumn pours  
 On earth's chill bosom leafy showers,  
 Rimes the blue eyelids of the dawn,  
 And frosts with crystal gems the lawn;  
 Thy welcome steps, Hygeia, guide 275  
 These groves and deepening dales beside,  
 While Peace her grateful influence breathes,  
 And scatters Plenty's golden wreaths.  
 And when old Winter chains the floods,  
 With tempests loads these labouring woods, 280  
 Drives headlong storms from Wever's brow,  
 And smooths the whiten'd world below;  
 Here 'mid the drifted wild disclose  
 Thy vermeil lips, and ivory brows,  
 Youth's arduous toil with smiles assuage, 285  
 And paint the wrinkled cheeks of age.

When bleak December's arctic breath  
 Urges the giant "work of death,"



Prone from these crags, high-roof'd with snow,  
 Pellucid piles *incessant* grow: 290  
 Vast columns deck'd with fretwork nice,  
 Glimmer on pedestals of ice,  
 The fun, the whelming whirlwind brave,  
 And seem to prop the pensile cave.

*Pellucid piles incessant grow, l. 290.]* The incessant droppings from many of the cliffs in the vicinity of Wootton produce in the course of a severe winter some of the most singular and beautiful pillars of ice that imagination can devise. In the month of January, 1795, I measured many of them that were from four to eleven feet in altitude, and from six inches to four feet in circumference. Some of these columns were of very unequal periphery, and jagged and fluted in a fantastic manner. Those that were of uniform thickness appeared as elegant supporters to the impending shelves and canopies of rock. The surfaces of the adjacent crags are beautifully glazed and decorated with a bright coating of ice, through which the *marchantia polymorpha* and several species of moss and fern displayed the luxuriance of spring. From the ceiling of the celebrated cavern in Dove-dale (well known by the name of Reynard's Hall) vast pendants of ice were clustered together, many of which, I believe, were full four yards in length; and these were tapered down to so fine a periphery, that their extremities were as sharp as the point of a sword. Others were twisted in a singular mode, and variegated with white incrustations of ice and snow, and the sides of the cavern were partially embossed with crystal nodules. The floor of this spacious cavern appeared decorated by the hand of magic. Wherever the droppings fell upon it, they became congealed, and hence one drop freezing upon another produced eccentric pillars of ice. These were of various dimensions, and of different colour. Had the frost continued a month longer, it is probable that these pillars would have come into contact with the growing pendants from the roof.



Indignant Frost the rock surveys, 295

And eyes beneath the crystal glaze,

Green foliage smile, and spangled fling

O'er his pale ice the tints of spring.

With dread severity of tone

He bellows from his ice-built throne : 300

"Shall Spring with verdant smiles perfume

"To brighten Winter's destin'd gloom?"

"Shelter'd with ice can she defy

"The rigour of my polar sky?"

Stamps the deep drift, and dark inshrouds 305

His withering head in awful clouds,

Showers from his shrivell'd hands around

Fierce hailstones on the marble ground,

Breathes from his nostrils keener gales,

And Famine stalks along the vales ! 310

Then straight the copse, the woodlands tall,

Their last surviving honours fall ;

Spite of the tyrant, Flora spreads

With fern her moss-embosom'd beds,



Beneath an icy mirror weaves 315  
A rich embroidery of leaves.

So the dire EMPRESS of the North  
Saw POLAND's glory bursting forth;

*So the dire EMPRESS, l. 317.*] Since this poem was written, the Empress of Russia has ceased to exist, and death has removed from the world one of the most formidable tyrants in female form that ever threatened the liberties of mankind. If we look into the life of this extraordinary woman, we shall find indeed little to admire, but much to condemn. Actuated by no principle of virtue, ambitious of unlimited power, crafty and resolute in her policy, she affected to consider the oppression of surrounding nations as a duty she owed to the safety of her own empire. It has however been asserted, that she was a popular sovereign within her dominions; but let it be remembered, that attachment and loyalty are often professed from fear, and it would require more than papal faith to believe that this principle had no influence with her enslaved commonalty. If we examine the ancient boundaries of Russia, and compare them with those that are delineated on a modern chart, truth will oblige us to confess the amazing growth of the empire under her auspices. But the historian, who exercises his solemn inquiry into the conduct of sovereigns, will inform posterity, that the aggrandisement of Russia in the late reign was attended with wanton tyranny and refined barbarities; and that rivers of human blood were made to flow from that horrible spirit of revenge which was ever conspicuous in the counsels of Catharine. Painful however must be the feelings of the historian who details with fidelity the massacres at Ismail, or those of a later date at Praga: for there are (as an admirable author observes) "certain degrees of human depravity creative of sensations, which no tongue can express, and no language describe."—*Balshan.*



Saw the bright fun of freedom shine

On Weyfel's tide with light divine : 320

Fresh radiance to each eye impart,

And kindle each exulting heart.

As round her throne gay courtiers prefs'd,

She thus the gaudy slaves address'd :

" Shall Poland e'er presume to scan 325

" The laws that fetter man from man ;

" Shall Liberty her breast inspire,

" And Genius fan her thoughts of fire ?

" Yon sun, that rolls its dazzling flood,

" Shall set in darkness and in blood ! " 330

She spoke—priests, nobles, warriors bow'd,

And zeal fanatic seiz'd the crowd !

Soon Poland heard the clanking chains,

With crimson carnage heav'd her plains,

Genius with death-like groans retir'd, 335

And struggling Liberty expir'd.

But hark ! some spirit seems to say,

Though Power may stretch his brutal sway,



And fierce with iron fences bind  
 Each nobler effort of the mind, 340  
 Hovers the hour, when Justice dread  
 On Tyranny's devoted head  
 Shall wing Destruction's bitter blast,  
 And bid the demon breathe his last;  
 Then shall this great, this heaven-taught truth, 345  
 Enliven Poland's rising youth:  
*Chains are the portion of the slave—*  
*The virtuous will be free and brave.*  
 So speaks amid th' admiring crowd  
 Immortal WASHINGTON aloud! 350  
 Sublime he stands with sheathed sword  
 On Virtue's fane Columbia's lord.

*Chains are the portion of the slave—*  
*The virtuous will be free and brave,* l. 348.] "The author hopes that he shall not be censured for unnecessary warmth on so interesting a subject. He is aware that it is become almost fashionable to stigmatize such sentiments as no better than empty declamation; but it is an ill symptom, and peculiar to modern times."

*On Virtue's fane Columbia's lord,* l. 352.] When this line was written, General Washington was President of America. He has now retired from



Fair Liberty with graceful march  
 Walks through the temple's trophied arch,  
 Mounts the bright steps, the Parian road 355  
 That winds around the blest abode;  
 Leads Peace along th' eternal height,  
 Vested in downy robes of light.

With artless smiles the seraph pair  
 Applaud their patron's generous care, 360  
 And sweetly bending on their knees  
 With native elegance of ease,  
 Present aloft the olive wreath,  
 To listening nations pæans breathe.  
 Charm'd as the vocal accents flow, 365  
 Labour inclines his swarthy brow,  
 Strews far around, array'd in health,  
 Leaves, flowers, and fruitage, blushing wealth!

the helm of affairs; but his name, like that of William the Third, will always be dear to every lover of genuine liberty; and he is with justice entitled the Saviour of his Country, the Supporter of Freedom, and the Benefactor of Mankind.



While Trade, with all her sails unfurl'd,  
Proclaims the PATRIOT OF THE WORLD. 370

O Wootton! oft I love to hear  
Thy wintry whirlwinds loud and clear;  
With dreadful pleasure bid them fill  
My listening ears, my bosom chill.  
As the sonorous North affails 375

Wever's bleak wilds and leafless vales,  
With awful majesty of might  
He bursts the billowy clouds of night,  
Booms the resounding glens among,  
And roaring rolls his snows along. 380

In clouds against my groaning fash  
Broad feathery flakes incessant dash,  
Or wheel below, and mingling form  
The frolic pageants of the storm.

Hark! with what aggravated roar 385  
Echo repeats her midnight lore;



Rends her dark solitudes and caves,  
 And bellowing shakes the mighty graves;  
 Appals with horror Fancy's mind,  
 While ghosts disturb'd thrill-shriek upon the wind. 390  
 Couch'd on her seat the timid hare  
 Listens each boisterous sweep of air,  
 Or peeps yon blasted furze between,  
 And eyes the snow-bewilder'd scene;  
 Instant retracts her shudd'ring head, 395  
 And closer nestles to her bed.  
 All sad and ruffled in the grove,  
 The fieldfare wakes from dreams of love;  
 Hears the loud north and beating snow,  
 Regards the drifted brakes below, 400  
 Swift to her wing returns her beak,  
 And shivers as the tempests break.  
 Upstarts the village dog aloof,  
 And howls beneath his rifted roof;

*And bellowing shakes the mighty graves, l. 388.] Alluding to the numerous tumuli on Wever and the adjacent hills.*



Looks from his den, and blinking hears 405  
 The driving tumult at his ears,  
 Instant withdraws his fear-froze breast,  
 Shrinks from the storm, and steals to rest.  
 So shrinks the pining fold, and sleeps  
 Beneath the valley's vaulted deeps;  
 Or crops the fescue's dewy blade,  
 And treads unseen the milky glade,  
 Forms by its breath fair-opening bowers,  
 Transparent domes and pearly towers.

Thus night rolls on, till orient dawn 415  
 Unbars the purple gates of morn,  
 Unfolds each vale, each snow-clad grove,  
 Mute founts, and glossy banks above.

[*So shrinks the pining fold, l. 409.*] It frequently happens that sheep, in this and the Peak country, are immersed many feet deep in the snow, for several days, before they are discovered. The perpetual steam from their nostrils keeps the snow immediately over their heads in a dissolving state, and hence a tunnel is constantly forming through the heaps above. This tunnel greatly facilitates their discovery, and supplies them with an abundance of fresh air. The warmth of these animals soon dissolves the surrounding snow, and, at



Thin streaky clouds convex'd by storms  
 Slowly expand their tissued forms, 420  
 Long bars of gray and crimson bright  
 Divert the golden threads of light;  
 Till Glory's nascent curve displays  
 One splendid orb, a world of rays!  
 Then lightens heaven's ethereal bound, 425  
 And all the spangled country twinkles round.

But leaves the Muse her flowery plain  
 For furly Winter's drear domain,  
 Her babbling founts, her spacious shades,  
 For leafless groves and dumb cascades? 430  
 Come, let us range yon winding wood,  
 Where Nature frowns with aspect rude;

length, the drift is so completely vaulted that they are able to stretch their limbs and search for subsistence. I am informed that sheep have been frequently found alive after having been entombed in the snow for a fortnight. Dr. Darwin, in his note upon *Polypodium Barometer*, in the second vol. of the Botanic Garden, observes, that when living animals are thus buried in snow, they are not moistened by its dissolution, on account of the watery particles being absorbed into the surrounding snow by capillary attraction.



Wild drapery hangs her craggy seat,

And silence chills her lone retreat.

But who can paint the shaggy scene, 435

Semblance of Britain's ancient mien,

Ere Labour twin'd his wheaten wreath,

Ere Sculpture taught the rock to breathe?

Such scenes enrapture GILPIN's heart,

When charm'd he leaves the realms of art; 440

High heaven and earth his thoughts engage,

And Taste and Virtue crown the sage.

Lo! as he walks his forest glade,

Broad shifting lights contrast the shade,

Dark waves the oak its giant form, 445

Looks o'er the clouds or gathering storm;

In marshall'd groups or playful trains

Gay hollies deck the furzy plains;

While fring'd with thickets Beaulieu fails,

And tremulous brightness floods the vales; 450



Her sea-girt mountains **Vegta** spreads,  
And lambent gleams **reveal their heads.**

Now as we climb our **Alpine way,**  
Wide bursts around the **vault of day.**  
Blaze not so **fierce, ye torrid beams,** 455  
Affuage your **scintillating streams;**  
**Hither diffuse, ye summer clouds,**  
Your lucid **veils, your fleecy shrouds;**  
Breathe cool, ye **pausing airs, and sweep**  
Earth's thyme-wove **hills, and emerald deep:** 460  
So shall my flowers **their gems unrol,**  
**And stud with golden stars each knoll;**

VECTA, l. 451.] Isle of Wight.

*So shall my flowers their gems unrol,*

*And stud with golden stars each knoll, l. 462.]* In addition to

the *Lepidium petraeum*, *Draba muralis*, *Orchis bifolia*, *Spiraea filipendula*, *Parnassia palustris*, *Osmunda lunaria*, &c. the *Viola grandiflora*, or great yellow violet, makes a beautiful appearance on the summits of Wever. Many of the mossy knolls and hillocks are frequently studded with the golden petals of this elegant plant. The late ingenious Mr. Hudson observes, in his *Flora Anglica*, "habitat in montosis pascuis, et in Wallicis solo putrido et palustri multoties observavimus." When it grows in low *marshy* situations its mountain character



O'er these aërial heights disclose  
A brighter blush when evening glows.

See how majestic Wever's brow 465  
Swells from each broken scene below!  
O'er the wide vales he bends sublime,  
And triumphs in his polar clime;  
Basking and tann'd, the landscapes hail  
His frown the shade, his sigh the gale. 470  
Sunk on the cushion'd moss I view  
Hills half-immers'd in vapours blue;  
There his pale barrier Malvern rears,  
And here ambitious Wrekin peers;

is nearly lost. I remember gathering this plant in Wales with stems ten or eleven inches in length, which were covered with leaves, and flowers of a proportionate size. These hung over a bank, and formed a beautiful fringe of green, purple, and gold. Some of the blossoms were entirely yellow; others half purple and half yellow; others totally purple, excepting a green or a golden eye. There were possibly many more of these *lusus Floræ* on the same spot. On Maffon, near Matlock, in Derbyshire, most of these varieties upon short footstalks may be discovered.

[There his pale barrier, l. 473.] The Wrekin in Shropshire, and the Malvern hills in Worcestershire, may be discerned by the naked eye from the summit of Wever, when the weather is settled and serene.



Buoy'd on a sea of mist he soars, 475  
 And looks o'er Cambria's winding shores ;  
 Lifts his tall crest with jealous fear,  
 And seems to prop the leaning sphere.  
 Stretch'd at my feet, what prospects glow !  
 A world of verdure smiles below. 480  
 Smooth'd in one vast expanse of green,  
 Hamlets, and hills, and woods are seen :  
 And where yon far-fam'd valley leads  
 Her velvet o'er a thousand meads,  
 Dove wanders with increasing force, 485  
 And threads of silver mark his course :  
 But north of these encircling graves,  
 Where Bunster's ridgy outline waves,

*Dove wanders with increasing force, l. 485.]* The Churnet falls into the Dove a few miles below Wootton, and greatly increases the current of that river.

*But north of these encircling graves, l. 487.]* Alluding to the *tumuli* which are scattered upon Wever and the adjacent hills. I saw one of them opened about two years since, and several large urns of burnt clay were then discovered. When they were removed they broke to pieces, and disclosed a quantity of ashes, bones, and teeth. In the ashes of one of these urns a small piece of brass or copper was found, and which is now in my possession: it appears



Fresh from his boiling source he guides

Round fringed isles his infant tides; 490

Or chill'd with awful shadows sweeps,

And murmuring rolls his glossy deeps:

Shoots o'er the shoals, and bounding steers

Long lines of foam from rock-built wears.

Then far beyond rude hills aspire,

495

Range above range, in blue attire;

to have been the extremity of a spear, or a knife. To what nation these  
tumuli belong the antiquarian must determine. It is probable that in  
Mr. Shaw's promised History of Staffordshire, an account will be given of  
these ancient receptacles of the dead.

*Where Bunster's ridgy outline waves, l. 488.]* "The highest summit of  
Bunster I estimate at 300 yards perpendicular above the Dove; but this hill,  
though of great elevation, is not nearly equal to Wever, nor so high as some  
of the Peak hills over the Dove." See *Pitt's View of the Agriculture of  
Staffordshire*.

*Long lines of foam from rock-built wears, l. 494.]* The late Sir William  
Fitzherbert, or his father, of Tiffington, in Derbyshire, erected several rude  
wears across the river in Dove-dale; and if they contribute little to the  
surrounding scenery, they certainly render the Dove a grander object to the  
ear of the traveller.



Where the lost eye pursues in vain  
Gigantic Grindon's bleak domain,  
Where yawning Thor the vale alarms,  
And Beauty sleeps in Horror's arms.

*Gigantic Grindon's bleak domain, l. 498.* The village of Grindon is situated on a hill of remarkable elevation.

*Where yawning Thor, l. 499.* Thor's Cave is situated a few miles from Grindon, and is justly entitled to the peculiar attention of every traveller. The mouth of the cave, the lofty and almost perpendicular precipice from whence it opens, the adjacent hills, the deep vale beneath, in whose bosom the river Manifold flows, form an astonishing display of natural grandeur and beauty. For a truly poetical description of Thor's Cave, I refer the reader to an author, whose poetry can perish only with language itself. See Darwin's *Botanic Garden*, vol. ii. p. 104.







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THE  
VALES OF WEVER.

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CANTO II.

—By yonder stream,  
Where oak and elm along the bordering mead  
Send forth wild melody from every bough,  
Together let us wander: where the hills,  
Cover'd with fleeces, to the lowing vale  
Reply; where tidings of content and peace  
Each echo brings. *Akenfide.*

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O NORTHWOOD! oft the poet sings  
How blest are they who taste the springs

O NORTHWOOD! l. 1.] The valley of Northwood is sequestered and romantic. It consists of a long winding bosom, considerably overshadowed with steep side-screens of wood. These shady masses are pleasingly diversified with glades, and stony pastures running between them. A brook glides through this valley, and a small hamlet, composed of the beautiful gray stone of the country, is scattered on its brink.



That bathe Arcadia's blooming waste,  
 With flowers and purple <sup>THE</sup> fruitage grac'd;  
 How blest, who range her vine-hung bowers, 5  
 When Noon his arrowy lustre pours,  
 While sweet Boeotian zephyrs play,  
 And fragrance cools the cheek of day:  
 So I, in humble measures, hail  
 Those blest who dwell within thy vale, 10  
 Who, 'mid their flocks and rural toil,  
 Feel conscious of my GRANVILLE's smile;  
 Those blest, who press thy moss-clad seats,  
 Or roam along thy coy retreats,  
 Thy filvan theatres and bays, 15  
 Where many a truant pathway strays,  
 Where many a flowret gems the green,  
 And breathes its odorous life unseen.  
 Oft though my steps imprint thy glades,  
 And pause beneath thy grateful shades; 20  
 Oft though mine ears, when noon retires,  
 Listen thy wildly-warbling quires;



Yet ever varying, ever new,  
 With joy thy scenes my eyes pursue:  
 Whether from yon incumbent height 25  
 They hurry on my raptur'd fight,  
 Or stealing through the filvan gloom,  
 I view them in a verdant loom:  
 Where on the dappled woof wide-spread,  
 An elm uprears his rev'rend head; 30  
 His front the whisp'ring breeze receives,  
 The blue sky trembles through his leaves.  
 A cottage group beneath his shade  
 Their locks with flowers and rushes braid;  
 And gurgling round dark beds of sedge, 35  
 A brook just shews its silver edge:  
 Then where the rising tiffue bends,  
 Broider'd with rock a bank impends;  
 And far, by Nature's hand design'd,  
 A woodland distance waves behind. 40



How bright aside this glittering way  
 The wild-thyme weaves her rich inlay!  
 Spiræa glows, and breathing speeds  
 Oppressive fragrance o'er the meads.  
 Zephyr at Flora's mandate springs, 45  
 And soft expands his viewless wings,  
 Wafts, as he fans the blossom'd ground,  
 Her blended essences around.—  
 Meek flowret! fair as Lapland snow,  
 Long mayst thou deck those banks below, 50  
 While here thy sister trains unfold  
 Their sapphire cheeks and eyes of gold!  
 So 'mid the blue profound of night,  
 Galaxy streams with snowy light,

*Spiræa glows*, l. 43.] *Spiræa ulmaria*, or *Meadow-sweet*.

*Meek flowret!* l. 49.] *Myosotis scorpioides*, or *Mouse-ear* scorpion grass, grows abundantly in the valley of Northwood; and its numerous flowers of bright blue, with a golden ring in their centre, make a very elegant appearance early in the summer. On some banks in this valley a beautiful variety of this plant may be found, with blossoms of the most delicate white.



While Venus lifts her golden eye, 55  
And countless glories gem the sky.

Hark! how yon shrikecock thrills the grove,  
How sweet the minstrelsy of love!  
Perch'd on the cover's loftier spray,  
He charms the languid ear of day. 60  
Oft as he bends his plummy wreath,  
And eyes the briar'd brake beneath,  
Where, curtain'd from intemperate skies,  
The partner of his summer joys,

*Hark! how yon shrikecock.* 1. 57.] The shrikecock, or misseltoe-thrush, abounds in this country, and as soon as the severity of winter is past, his delightful melody is heard at the first break of day. He selects some peculiar tree early in the spring, to which, if unmolested, he will invariably resort, and continue to sing from the same situation for several hours every day, until the decline of summer. The nightingale is also observed to select some peculiar bush in the brake in preference to others. I think Shakespeare, Milton, and Mason, have noticed this circumstance; and it has not escaped Dr. Darwin:

"There as sad Philomel, alike forlorn,  
Sings to the night from her accustom'd thorn."

*Botanic Garden*, vol. i. l. 34.



With filken wings, and eider breast, 65  
 Sits cow'ring o'er her pregnant nest,  
 His throbbing heart affection swells,  
 And louder songs of rapture thrill the dells.

High o'er the covers STANTON towers,  
 And views with jealous hate these bowers: 70  
 Stripp'd of her oaks and hawthorn shades,  
 She spurns the grove, the wood-wild glades;  
 Braves Winter's ice-encrusted form,  
 And challenges the midnight storm;  
 Or strains her neck with haughty air, 75  
 And meets the sun with eagle stare;  
 Points her cold bosom to his rays,  
 And basks sublime in Summer's blaze.

*High o'er the covers STANTON towers, l. 69.]* The village of Stanton is situated on a bleak eminence, and commands very rich and extensive prospects. From the appearance of the soil in many of the adjacent inclosures, and from many stools of trees, still discernible, there is reason to suppose that a great part of this naked moor was formerly overshadowed with wood. In this village, I am informed, the celebrated Archbishop Sheldon was born, who founded the Theatre at Oxford, and bequeathed a valuable library to that Univerfity.



Lo! where those oaks encircling meet,  
 There Genius form'd his rural seat. 80  
 Oft in calm solitude the sage  
 Compos'd his fascinating page:  
 Or bending on the turf survey'd  
 With nice regard each flower and blade:  
 Or mark'd gay Nature's liberal smile, 85  
 Admir'd Britannia's temperate isle;  
 Yet thought on Gallia's lovelier vales,  
 Her brighter founts, her softer gales,  
 Thought on her *chains* with Freedom's sigh,  
 And all the patriot kindled in his eye. 90

*Lo! where those oaks encircling meet,*

*There Genius form'd his rural seat,* l. 80.] In a field, at a small distance from Northwood, stands a cluster of oaks, commonly called the *Twenty Oaks*. They form a circle, disclosing between their trunks a beautiful prospect. To this silent retreat Rousseau used frequently to retire, during his residence at Wootton, and some of the stones may still be seen which formed his seat.

*Compos'd his fascinating page,* l. 82.] *Letters on Botany,* by J. J. Rousseau.



With what delight I view the skies,  
 Now flush'd with evening's brilliant dyes!  
 While floods of glowing vapour spread  
 Along each vale's prolific bed.  
 Poor, but contented, yonder swain, 95  
 Returning from the golden plain,  
 Climbs the tall cliff with cheerful tread,  
 And sees afar his turf-built shed,  
 Where Love connubial forms the smile  
 Which brightens poverty and toil; 100  
 Where cherub Innocence expands,  
 Loaded with flowers, his baby hands,  
 Strews harebells o'er the cottage floor,  
 With orchis garlands wreathes the door.  
 Oh! say what marble-pillar'd dome, 105  
 Where Vice and sceptred Grandeur roam,

*With orchis garlands, l. 104.] The Orchis maculata, or spotted orchis,*  
 grows so profusely in many parts of this country, that the walls of cottages  
 are frequently decorated with garlands composed of its purple spikes.



Within thy bosom can excite  
 Feelings so pregnant with delight  
 As scenes like these. Is aught so fair,  
 Beneath this argent cope of air, **110**  
 As Love and Labour charm'd to rest  
 On sweet Contentment's balmy breast?

Once more the morn with blushing rays  
 Steals o'er my Northwood's silvan maze,  
 Fringes her flowery meads with dew, **115**  
 And soft unrols her distant views:  
 From her brook's vocal channel steams  
 The curling mist in silvery gleams,  
 Through crowding alders smokes afar,  
 Swells from the vale, and melts in air. **120**  
 Not so when Winter's icy hand  
 Whitens Britannia's shivering land;  
 Then flow the billowy vapours glide,  
 And roll their lazy oceans wide.



Oft have I mark'd from MATHFIELD's brow 125  
 Her mist-embofom'd realms below,  
 While here and there a soaring tree  
 Waded amid the vapoury sea,  
 And ASHBORNE's spire to distant fight  
 Tower'd like a mast in dubious light: 130  
 If through the lucid gloom the sun  
 With struggling beams his journey won,  
 Soon as he rais'd his crimson eye,  
 With transport flash'd th' illumin'd sky;  
 The vane rekindling at his blaze 135  
 Shot like a meteor through the haze;  
 The trees in liquid lustre flow'd,  
 And all the dim transparence glow'd.—  
 Pale are the splendours that adorn,  
 In these blest regions, Winter's morn, 140  
 To those that gild the dreary steeps  
 Of Lapland pil'd in awful heaps;

*Oft have I mark'd from MATHFIELD's brow, l. 125.]* The village of Upper  
 Mathfield is situated a very few miles distant from Ashborne.



Where as the rising orb of day  
 Bids all his glorious lightnings play,  
 Instant the snow-incrusted scene **145**  
 Unfolds a dazzling waste of sheen:  
 Their diamond brows the mountains bend,  
 The forests ice-girt arms extend;  
 The torpid cataract displays  
 Cerulean curves of magic rays. **150**  
 The rustic on his lawns below  
 Shoves from his cot the melting snow,  
 Salutes the wondrous change, and seems  
 To taste of life's diviner streams;  
 Breathes with delight the temperate air, **155**  
 And views with half-shut eyes the boundless glare.

Hark! what hoarse clamours rend the vale!

What thunders load th' affrighted gale!

Peal answers peal; the woods around

Reverb'rate the prefageful sound. **160**



Ah me! though Summer's genial ray  
 Wak'd into life each tender spray,  
 Cloth'd yon proud wood in robes of green,  
 And Peace and Beauty blest'd the scene;  
 This morn is doom'd to prostrate low 165  
 The oaken crown from OUSELEY's brow.  
 There oft the traveller passing by,  
 "Stops short," though evening hover nigh,  
 Leans on his staff, well-pleas'd furveys,  
 OUSELEY! thy dale, thy leafy maze; 170  
 Where glides the emerald mead between  
 Thy sloping hill's embowering screen,  
 Where thy gray cottage, roof'd with heath,  
 Fronts the sweet-opening road beneath;  
 While eddying flow the blue smoke creeps 175  
 Round thy dark woods and pendent steeps,

*The oaken crown from OUSELEY's brow, l. 166.] In the valley of North-wood stands a cottage, well known by the name of Ouseley Cross. It is situated on the confines of a beautiful dell, and before the destruction of one of its best appendages (Rangemoor Wood), could not fail of attracting the eye of the most indifferent observer. This hanging wood was cut down indiscriminately, according to the fashion of modern times.*



And o'er its rocky bed thy stream  
 Complaining darts a scanty gleam.  
 SEE where the joyous woodmen throng—  
 I hate their unrelenting song—  
 See how their busy arms reveal  
 Keen lightnings from th' uplifted steel;  
 Nor generous Youth, nor hoary Age,  
 Nor Beauty's self, can stay their rage;  
 Stalks Havoc with colossal stride,  
 And hurls the silvan ruins wide.  
 Thus late round WARSAW's marshy plains,  
 SUWARROW led his valiant trains;

*Thus late round WARSAW's marshy plains, l. 187.]* "Mark," says a sublime parliamentary orator, "the still more sanguinary efforts of the despot of Russia. \* \* \* \* \* See her thanking her favourite General Suwarrow, and, still more impious, thanking Heaven for the opportunity: thanking him for the most iniquitous act of cruelty the bloody page of history has recorded, the murderous scene at PRAGA!! where, not in the heat and fury of action, not in the first moments of impatience and revenge; but, after a cold deliberate pause of some hours, he ordered a methodical massacre of ten thousand women and children!"—*Mr. Sheridan, in the House of Commons.*

For a brief account of the horrible massacres committed by General Suwarrow and his army at the capture of Ismail, upon the 22d of December, 1790, see Belsham's *Memoirs of George III.* vol. iv. p. 242.



High o'er the crimson-banner'd throng  
 The proud barbarian tower'd along, 199  
 Gave Freedom's sons untimely graves,  
 And frown'd the cowards into slaves!  
 Yes, wretched POLAND! Virtue weeps  
 Thy sons laid low in mangled heaps,  
 Thy daughters gasping on the ground, 195  
 Thy babes in Death's cold fetters bound:  
 No tender voice affluag'd their cries,  
 No finger clos'd their dying eyes,  
 Nor dirge, nor slowly-chaunted prayer,  
 Peal'd through the fullen vault of air: 200  
 But o'er thy widely-mournful lands

Fierce Murder clapp'd his reeking hands;

Loud stamp'd in PRAGA's groaning street,

The bands of hell, their iron feet,

Shouted like Herod's fiends of yore, 205

And bath'd their limbs in human gore.

With grief I mark the bursting light,

Where lately frown'd umbrageous Night;



Where, when the fathers of that wood  
 Aloft in rev'rend grandeur stood, **210**  
 The moon-bright fairies tripp'd along,  
 And softly trill'd their custom'd song,  
 By glens and lustrous thickets stray'd,  
 And little shadows skimm'd the glade.  
 Sweet rose-leaves wreath'd their flaxen hair, **215**  
 Their azure mantles wav'd in air;  
 Beads of fresh dew on cobwebs strung,  
 Around their necks of ivory hung;  
 And as they chas'd the breeze of night,  
 Their blue eyes sparkled with delight. **220**

And are YE fallen, YE who late  
 Look'd conscious of superior state,  
 Flung twilight o'er the grassy knoll,  
 As noon inflam'd the southern pole?

*And are YE fallen, YE who late, l. 221.]* Adjoining to *Ouseley Cross* was a bowling-green, which is still discernible, where the gentlemen in the neighbourhood formerly assembled. On the edge of this ancient green were stationed some oaks and elms of great magnitude and remarkable beauty. At this moment they lie stretched on those banks which they used to shade and adorn.



'Tis mournful to recall your bowers, 225  
 Impervious to the summer showers;  
 'Tis mournful to retrace this scene,  
 The festive board, the crowd, the green  
 That still with velvet sward betrays  
 The happier feats of other days. 230  
 The axe again! fresh terrors seize  
 The infant copse, the aged trees.  
 Think not, ye woods, who fondly stay  
 The golden smiles of parting day,  
 Think not, that Havoc's ruthless hand 235  
 Shall dash your honours on the land:  
 My friend, your master, spreads his arms,  
 He comes to shield you from alarms;  
 Yes, he delights to see you climb,  
 Tuft above tuft, his banks sublime; 240  
 To see your generous branches rise  
 Free, as himself, amid the skies.

*Think not, ye woods, who fondly stay*  
*The golden smiles of parting day, l. 234.] Several of the lofty side-*  
*screens of wood, fronting the west, are the property of the Rev. J. Granville,*  
*of Calwich.*



From these distracted realms I lead  
 My steps o'er many a waving mead,  
 To groves with sacred stillness blest,  
 To scenes congenial to my breast.  
 Come, GRANVILLE! thou, whose fostering hand  
 Guards the slow growths of Albion's land;  
 For thee, O friend, the placid Spring  
 Wafts her pure balm on sweetest wing;  
 Thy lake's clear azure whispering curls,  
 And Flora's tissued veil unfurls.  
 For thee the woodland kings display  
 The silvery gem, the golden spray,  
 Weave o'er thy banks a penfile wreath,  
 And cool thy twilight walks beneath.

HERE amid black sequester'd shades,  
 That darken'd once those funny glades,  
 Frown'd a gray PILE! The grass-grown walls  
 (Dire Superstition's gloomy halls),

*Frown'd a gray PILE! l. 259.]* There was formerly a large monastery at Calwich, and a part of the Monks' garden, and some of their fish-ponds, are,



The roof, the towers with ivy crown'd,  
 Damp Horror spread his arms around.  
 Oft has this vale, when Midnight drove  
 Her car in silence through the grove,  
 Seen tremulous lights within the pile, 265  
 Pass and repass the cloister'd aisle;  
 Seen the funereal pall and bier,  
 Bedew'd with Friendship's parting tear;  
 Seen the sad slowly-moving bands,  
 Pale tapers glimmering in their hands; 270  
 Heard the loud choir within the cave,  
 Chant the sweet requiem on the grave.

Late as the night with Stygian gloom  
 Clouded each warrior's mighty tomb,

I believe, still to be seen. During the alterations in the grounds about Calwich, in the late Mr. Granville's life, numbers of skulls and human bones were frequently discovered; and large quantities have lately been found by the work-people now employing at Calwich. 1796.

Clouded each warrior's mighty tomb, l. 274.] Alluding to the tumuli on Weyer hills.



Smooth'd the deep vales, obscur'd each grove, 275

And wrapp'd in blackest woof the Dove;

Sudden, tremendous fires o'erspread

With crimson glory WEVER's head,

Hurl'd up to heaven their forked rays,

And Night retreated from the blaze. 280

Fierce and more fierce the flaming tides

Roll'd down the mountain's kindling sides,

While smoke, amid the sanguine glare,

Unwieldy volumes heav'd in air.

As the lone pilgrim urg'd his way, 285

Pondering on life's uncertain day,

Sudden from CALTON's dreary height

Burst on his ken a world of light;

With Fear's broad eye he view'd the blaze,

And look'd the statue of amaze: 290

*Sudden, tremendous fires, l. 277.]* The burning of a large tract of furze on Wever hills and Calton moor, makes a grand appearance amidst the gloom of night; and the shouts of the cottagers, who frequently watch the conflagration, lest it should expire too soon, or extend too far, are highly calculated to inspire terror into the mind of a traveller unacquainted with these midnight exhibitions.



Saw (as bewildering Fancy play'd the deep  
 Her meteors through the driving shade)  
 Lean spectres pile the funeral pyre;  
 And more than mortals stalk around the fire!

So from MISENUM's bay, the sage  
 Heard the distracted mountain's rage,  
 Saw dazzling floods to heaven aspire,  
 Hurl'd from Vesuvio's jaws of fire;  
 From gulfs terrific Lava's tide,  
 Prone to the strand its fury guide,  
 Stream in red paths along each plain,  
 And glory gild the troubled main.  
 The calm philosopher; array'd  
 In friendship, spurn'd Misenus's shade;  
 Brav'd the wild ocean's frantic roar,  
 And helm'd his course to STABIAE's shore.

Safe on the coast, with outstretch'd arms

He sooth'd his friend's confus'd alarms,

*So from MISENUM's bay, the sage, l. 295.] Pliny lost his life near the villa of his friend Pomponianus, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius.*



Smiling assum'd Hope's cheerful mien,  
 But dropp'd a generous tear unseen. 310  
 Ere long sulphureous clouds imbrown'd  
 The heavens, and roll'd along the ground;  
 Trembled the earth; the wheeling deep  
 Lash'd the proud cliff's incumbent steep;  
 While shrieks of death and terror's cries, 315  
 With mingled wailings pierc'd the skies.  
 Now lava from each glowing height  
 Pour'd torrents of excessive light,  
 Then tenfold darkness curtain'd wide  
 The mountains and the tossing tide: 320  
 Thus fleeting day and transient night  
 Govern'd with momentary might!  
 As the wild coast the sage explor'd,  
 Her fiery storms Destruction shower'd,  
 Effus'd her suffocative breath, 325  
 And Science sunk into the arms of Death.



Smiling all round him, his cheerful mien,

310

But drop'd a generous tear unseen.

The long, sulphurous clouds withdrew;

The hot sun, and roll'd along the ground;

Trembled the earth; the wheeling deep

Roll'd the proud cliff's incumbent steep;

315

While thrills of death and terror's cries

With mingled wailings pierc'd the skies.

Not far from each glowing height

Form'd columns of excessive light.

Then rent the darkness curtain'd wide

320

The mountains and the rolling tide:

Thus fleeing day and transient night

Gave way with momentary flight!

As the wild coast the late explosion

Her lava forms: Debris of mountains

Heard her insupportable crash.

And Science sunk into the arms of Death.



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**CANTO III.**





### CONTENTS OF THE THIRD CANTO.

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( 10 )

THE

VALES OF WEVER.

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CANTO III.

—Now the same glad task  
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,  
We hasten to recount the various springs  
Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin  
Their grateful influence to the prime effect  
Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge  
The complicated joy. *Akenside.*

---

**RAMSOR!** thy savage tracts of heath,  
Where Ague stalks with chattering teeth,

**RAMSOR!** *thy savage tracts of heath, l. i.] Ramsor Moor is a large uncultivated waste of great elevation, and, from various situations, commands a vast extent of diversified scenery. Some parts of this moor are very swampy, while others are either covered over with loose pieces of stone, or quickened only with meagre vegetation.*



Where untam'd Nature joyless roves,  
 And scowls o'er Cotton's rising groves;  
 Oft have beheld in days of yore 5  
 The lordly Briton smear'd with gore,  
 Mark'd the rude monarch of the soil  
 Swing on his back his gasping spoil,  
 Flounce through the blood-stain'd snow with joy,  
 While Conquest flush'd his daring eye. 10  
 Though the green holly ne'er has grac'd  
 With vermeil fruits thy dreary waste;  
 Though the tall birch her weeping head  
 Ne'er wav'd athwart thy flinty bed;  
 Though o'er these wilds no fountains flow, 15  
 No lakes of rippling silver glow:  
 Yet, Ramfor, oft when Summer's eye  
 Beams "gaily fierce" afloat the sky,

*And scowls o'er Cotton's rising groves, l. 4.]* Beyond Ramfor Moor, in a romantic and beautiful vale, lies Cotton, the seat of Thomas Gilbert, Esq. late Member of Parliament for Lichfield. By his unwearied exertions not only the value and beauty of the surrounding country have been surprisingly increased, but the morals and religion of the poor most happily secured.



My lips have hail'd thy regions bare,  
And grateful drank thy freshening air. 20

Dark from these heights a wood impends,  
And round the dizzy bank extends,  
Shoots down the tangled vale beneath,  
Hangs o'er the brook a verdant wreath;  
Then forms each hill's continued screen, 25  
And paints with verdure all the scene.—  
Welcome, ye forest glens! ye bays!

Ye crags that glimmer in the maze!  
Welcome, ye paths through winding shade!

(Where oft your musing Rousseau stray'd;) 30  
High o'er your mix'd attractive powers  
Yon venerable mansion towers;

*Dark from these heights a wood impends, l. 21.] Alluding to the beautiful scenery in Wootton Park.*

*(Where oft your musing Rousseau stray'd), l. 30.] It is recorded that Rousseau was extremely partial to the scenery in Wootton Park.*

*Yon venerable mansion towers, l. 32.] Wootton Lodge is an interesting and picturesque structure, and is reported to have been erected under the eye of*



Swells from the dusky depths between,  
And gloomy grandeur crowns the scene.

Fix'd on a rock, the castled pile 35

Hears unconcern'd the whirlwinds toil,

Bids her embattled walls defy

The vollied storms of Winter's sky.

Hark! how melodious Echo swells

Her voice from deep-retiring dells; 40

Inigo Jones. It is situated on the side of a rocky bank, which descends behind the house nearly perpendicular, and rises rather abruptly in the front. It was formerly the seat of an ancient Staffordshire family of the name of Fleetwood. The late Mr. Unwin rescued this venerable pile from decay, and restored it to its former respectability. The park, which is unhappily removed from the house, is a scene of uncommon beauty. It comprises extensive woodlands, diversified with glades and vallies. The trees, especially towards the *northern* extremity of the park, form majestic side-screens, and the lofty banks are decorated with rock, and the wildest furniture of nature. Here a small brook enters the park, and descends for a very considerable distance down a steep and rugged channel: in the summer season it scarcely purls, but I have frequently been present, when,

“ ——— At every fall

Down the steep windings of the channell'd rock,

Remurmuring rush'd the congregated floods,

With hoarser inundation.”

*Akenfide.*



Trills her soft notes 'mid murmuring rills,  
 Her grots with tuneful tumult fills.  
 Pleas'd all around, cool shades among,  
 The feather'd audience drink the song;  
 Or hang in air on moveless wings, **45**  
 And greet the music as it springs;  
 Or in gray clouds assemble near,  
 A sweeter concert than their own to hear.

So when the fond enthusiast flings  
 Joy from the harp's ecstatic strings, **50**  
 Or sweeps, spontaneous as the breeze,  
 With Parian hands th' impassion'd keys;  
 Crowds hang around th' enchanting fair,  
 Mark the fine pause, the lively air:  
 Attention bends each ravish'd ear, **55**  
 Sparkling each eye with Rapture's tear;  
 The tuneful measures float along,  
 And love and music charm th' unbreathing throng.



With fruits purpureal nodding bright,  
 The bilberry tufts each perilous height, 60  
 Or spreads her garnish'd arms around,  
 And foliage smooths the treacherous ground.  
 Soon as the lark his plumes expands,  
 And librates o'er the varied lands;  
 Each cottage pours, in smiles array'd, 65  
 Its infant tenants to the shade;  
 Sweet voices ring from grove to grove,  
 And vibrate round the heights above.  
 And when with pomp of lights and shades,  
 Evening adorns these lengthening glades, 70  
 Retracing flow their beaten way,  
 The harmless plunderers display  
 Died lips, blue teeth, and hands besmear'd,  
 Huge baskets on their heads uprear'd;  
 All, all reluctant leave their toil, 75  
 And hats and kerchiefs share the spoil.



Leaving these wood-wild glens, I guide  
 My steps yon glimmering brook beside—  
 O ye dear scenes, where Plenty's smile  
 Cheers Industry imbrown'd with toil; 80  
 O ye dear scenes, where Culture leads  
 Her blooming trains along your meads;  
 Not wealth with jewell'd brows elate,  
 Nor all the vanity of state,  
 Should e'er these hours of fond delight 85  
 Plunge in Oblivion's starless night,  
 Should e'er induce me to forego  
 That soft consolatory woe  
 Which Memory wakes, on former days  
 When sadly-sweet she builds her lays, 90  
 Summons fair Fancy, bids me tread  
 Those fields with waving treasures spread,  
 And hail these banks which Flora wreaths,  
 This holy calm which Summer breathes!



CHURNET! how fleet thy waters roll 95  
 Aside this grassy-mantled knoll,  
 And down yon ford impatient urge  
 Each white exasperated surge.  
 The meadow gain'd, how smooth they glide!  
 The lucid surface dimpling wide: 100  
 Now seem to pause, yet silent rove,  
 Then bound impetuous into DOVE.

So fleet, so changeful, dark and clear,  
 Existence rolls from year to year!  
 When Health arrays Youth's cloudless morn, 105  
 And Pleasure gilds each rising dawn,  
 On pinions swift as orient light,  
 Time seems to wing his airy flight:  
 But when th' illusive landscape fades,  
 Saddening at Death's disastrous shades, 110  
 When wrapp'd in night Affection tries  
 In vain to close her aching eyes,



Looks back on life, on widow'd years,  
 And steeps her pillow in her tears;  
 How fullen strikes the bell! How flow **115**  
 Each awful moment seems to flow!  
 Sorrow the tedious night deplores,  
 And Fancy wails the lengthen'd hours.

Here oft the sister Naiads urge  
 Their steps on Churnet's flowery verge, **120**  
 Smile at the smiles, whene'er they pass,  
 Of beauty beaming in the glass.—  
 Lo! now they leave their shadowy caves,  
 And cleave with snow-white arms the waves;  
 Till (where dismantled ALTON lours **125**  
 'Mid tottering wrecks, time-moulder'd towers,  
 Round each pale bastion ivy creeps,  
 And fallen grandeur decks the steep)

*Till (where dismantled ALTON lours, l. 125.)* Alton, or Aloton Castle, is situated on a rocky eminence, upon the banks of the river Churnet: a few shattered towers and walls only remain, but they are so disposed as to impress the mind with an idea of the former extent of the Castle.



With dew-dropp'd hands they clasp the sedge,  
On pearly feet ascend the edge; 130

Their limbs in folds of lustre veil,  
And give their tresses to the gale.

As they trip down the verdant shore,  
Sudden, emergent waters roar;

Rebellowing clamours loud assail 135

Alton's proud cliff and echoing vale,  
In blackening volumes smoke ascends,

O'er heaven's ærial arch extends,  
Dims every flower and radiant green,

And curtains all the busy scene. 140

Chill'd with strange horrors, pause the fair,  
Gaze on the foam-revolving wear;

Each closer binds her sister's hand;  
Fear-fix'd the lovely statues stand.

Lo! where the wheeling river boils, 145

Sudden, a portal hoarse recoils;

*Sudden, a portal hoarse recoils, l. 146.] Alluding to the wire-mills, &c. at Alton.*



Dark forms, within a deep recess,  
 Around their ponderous anvils prefs,  
 Or jarring beat the brazen thongs,  
 And gorge with brads th' insatiate tongs. 150  
 But now the footy crowds a while  
 Cast on the fair "a ghastly smile;"  
 With lifted hammers pois'd in air,  
 Gaze on the nymphs, forget their care.  
 Again the modern Cyclops throng, 155  
 And roll their brazen wreaths along,  
 Ope the broad stove's refulgent door,  
 And Glory shudders on the floor:  
 Loud roars the wind! fresh flames aspire,  
 Ceil the wide vault with sheets of fire, 160

*And gorge with brads th' insatiate tongs, l. 150.]* Alluding to the large forceps, in whose mouth the pointed thong of wire is inserted through a certain gauge. These forceps are kept in a state of action and reaction by the revolution of wheels below, which are worked by water.

*And roll their brazen wreaths along, l. 156.]* Alluding to the circular rolls of wire which are placed in the furnaces, preparatory to certain modes of elongation. The reader must excuse this concise explanation, as the author does not feel himself authorized to detail the machinery, &c. of these mills.



With squander'd stars the smoke illumine,  
While lightnings quiver through the gloom.

So when DIANA's vestal train  
With rapture launch'd upon the main,  
O'er the bright world of waters shone 165  
Morn's crimson clouds, Light's gorgeous throne;  
Soft Echoes warbled from their caves,  
As Zephyr swept the gazing waves:  
Huge Tritons hurried from afar,  
And whirl'd along the golden car; 170  
The golden car unbathed flew,  
And ting'd the surf with golden hue.  
Pleas'd all around, gigantic whales  
Swarm'd from their coral bowers and vales,  
Seals plough'd the tides with awkward leap, 175  
And grampi gamboll'd on the deep.  
High in the north, 'mid Ocean's smiles,  
Tower'd MELIGUNIS, queen of isles:

*Tower'd MELIGUNIS, queen of isles, l. 178.] Meligunis is the largest of the Æolian isles, and is now called Lipara.*



There, in a mountain's shaggy fort,  
 Malignant Vulcan held his court: 180  
 Forg'd his keen arrows barb'd with death,  
 And pointed Murder's venom'd teeth:  
 Form'd the broad axe with Caution's guile,  
 And fierce Bellona footh'd his toil.  
 Then spoke the nymphs: "Ye Tritons, lead 185  
 Our car o'er Ocean's pearly mead,  
 Thither, O where yon smoke inshrouds  
 Jove's azure in a night of clouds."  
 Instant the pleasure-harness'd throng  
 Skimm'd the redundant furge along: 190  
 With cheeks averted ey'd the fair,  
 Dwelt on their looks, their graceful air:  
 Wonder'd that Dian's beauteous maids  
 Admir'd grim Vulcan's dreary shades,  
 Wonder'd that they should e'er explore 195  
 The terrors of his blasted shore.  
 Seen from the sinking coast, the car  
 Gleam'd on the waves a setting star.



With Beauty's fear, and Wonder's smile,  
 The nymphs beheld the growing isle; 200  
 Saw each foam-crested surge expand  
 Its troubled waters on the strand;  
 Saw tide-worn caverns gape around,  
 While mountains rear'd on mountains frown'd.  
 Safe on the sands, the grateful fair 205  
 Implor'd Diana's guardian care,  
 Then bounding from their golden seat,  
 Pierc'd on light step the dread retreat.  
 As they tripp'd down the winding vale,  
 In thunder spoke the resting gale, 210  
 Sulphureous clouds the skies imbrown'd,  
 And tremulous lightnings glimmer'd round.  
 Now flow the graceful strangers press'd  
 Beside a mountain's barren breast,  
 On footsteps half-restrain'd they trod, 215  
 And ey'd the yawning mansions of the God.



Trembled the nymphs, when 'mid the cave  
 They saw the swarthy monsters flave;  
 Saw on each front one giant brow,  
 One shield-like eyeball glare below. 220  
 Trembled the nymphs, when 'mid the fire,  
 They heard the bellows deep respire,  
 Heard the infernal anvils found,  
 And Labour's ponderous groans rebound:  
 Etna each loud concussion mock'd, 225  
 Trinacria's echoing caverns rock'd,  
 Rebellow'd loud Hesperia's shore,  
 And Cynus answer'd to the mighty roar.

*Trembled the nymphs, l. 217.] The passage from line 217 to line 228 is borrowed from the following lines in Callimachus, which have been universally admired for their strength and sublimity:*

Αἱ Νύμφαι δ' ἔδδειςαν, ὅπως ἴδον αἶνὰ πέλωρα,  
 Πρηόσιν Οσσείοισιν ἑοικότα, πᾶσι δ' ὑπ' ὄφρυν  
 Φάεα μανόγληνοι σάκεϊ ἴσα τετραβοεῖω,  
 Δεινὸν ὑπογλαύσοντα, καὶ ὅππῳ δέπρον ἄκυσαν  
 Ἀκμονος ἠχῆσαντος, ἐπὶ μέγα πελὺ τ' ἄημα  
 Φυσάων, αὐτῶν τε βαρὺν σόνον· αὖτε γὰρ Ἀΐνη,  
 Αὖτε δὲ Τρινακρὴ Σικανῶν ἔδος, αὖτε δὲ γείτων  
 Ἰταλὴ, μεγάλην δὲ βοήν ἐπὶ Κύρνος αὖτει.



Hence let my eager steps ascend  
 Where FARLEY's lofty banks impend.— 230  
 But who can view with careless eye  
 The glories of yon western sky;  
 Who pierce those midnight depths of shade,  
 Who print that sun-illumin'd glade,  
 And feel no grateful raptures charm 235  
 His thoughts, his breast no transport warm?  
 O sovereign God! thy gracious power  
 Glows on each leaf and opening flower:  
 From the tall oak's umbrageous wreath  
 Down to the tiny blade beneath; 240  
 From the wild mountain's naked brow,  
 To plains of rustling gold below;  
 The same mysterious hand we trace,  
 The same sublimity and grace.

*Where FARLEY's lofty banks impend, l. 230.]* The village of Farley is situated very high above the Churnet.

*The same mysterious hand we trace,*  
*The same sublimity and grace, l. 244.]* In all the works of nature  
 the power of the Supreme Being is fully manifested. They are, as an



Whether, O God! in vengeance hurl'd, 245  
 Thy thunders rock an impious world;  
 Whether thy lightnings scorch the soil,  
 And startle Guilt's insulting smile:  
 Or from thy throne of hallow'd sheen,  
 Noon darts abroad his radiance keen; 250  
 Through the hush'd skies no breezes play,  
 But Silence broods o'er listening day:  
 VIRTUE will bend her duteous knee,  
 Spread her adoring hands to THEE,

admirable poet happily entitles them, "*the varied God.*" The following very sublime passage, from the writings of Dr. Blair, cannot fail of proving acceptable to the reader: "In the midst of your solitary musings, lift your eyes, and behold all nature full of God. Look up to the firmament, and admire his glory. Look round the earth, and observe his presence every where displayed. If the gay landscape or the fruitful field present themselves to your eye, behold him smiling upon his works. If the mountain raise its lofty head, or the expanse of waters roll its tide before you, contemplate in those great and solemn objects his power and majesty. Nature, in all its diversities, is a varied manifestation of the Deity. If you were to take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there you would find him. For in him you live and move. He fills and animates all space. In the barren wilderness, as in the peopled region, you can trace his footsteps, and in the deepest solitude you may hear a voice which testifies of him."



Bow her meek head with pious air; 255  
And breathe her inexpressive prayer!

How proud beyond this green descent,  
Yon hill exalts his rough extent!  
(Gay furze and ling around his head,  
Their floods of gold and purple spread;) 260  
With pride of contrast bold he sweeps  
Round GILBERT'S vale, and shadowy deeps:  
Oh! at that name what sorrows fill  
My breast! what sad reflections chill!

SHE, who was born to picture youth, 265  
When rob'd in all the charms of truth;  
Who well deserv'd her father's prayer,  
And all her mother's tender care;  
Left this gay world in early bloom,  
Fair martyr to th' insatiate tomb! 270

*Yon hill exalts his rough extent, l. 258.] Whiston Moor.*

SHE, *who was born to picture youth, l. 265.]* In memory of Miss Gilbert,  
only daughter of Thomas Gilbert, Esq. of Cotton, Staffordshire.



Not fond Affection's sleepless eyes,  
 Nor love that breath'd parental sighs,  
 Nor med'cine whelm'd in tears, could save  
 Their smiling treasure from the grave!

Ere the blue fog Dove's silver breast 275  
 Curtains beneath his filmy vest,  
 Ere the bat wings her twilight way,  
 Or gambols wild in lunar day,  
 I haste to pass one tranquil hour,  
 Clos'd in yon vale's sequester'd bower. 280  
 And, WOOTTON, since I leave thy shade,  
 Where oft my early steps have stray'd,  
 Since I must quit yon rock-wrought dell,  
 Where Memory oft shall love to dwell;  
 HEAR, while your vesper breezes play, 285  
 This last fond tribute of my lay:  
 Ne'er may the axe in murd'rous mood  
 Disrobe thy penfile banks of wood,



Nor Havoc with barbarian call  
 Thy sacred solitudes appal.  
 Be thine to hear some Thomson's song,  
 Warbling thy low-brow'd cliffs among,  
 While Echo charms the listening sphere,  
 And WEVER bends his raptur'd ear.

FINIS.